471 and supplemented. Tihwa, T'a Ch'eng, and Sui-ting have become principal "industrial" centers boasting of leather tanneries, flour mills, and auto repair and small parts shops. Concentration has, where possible, been put upon the installation of utilities in these and other major cities, and electricity, telephone, and telegraph facilities are now well established. In 1939 it was reported that there were twenty Sinkiang factories of various kinds, including tanneries and mills and a soap factory.

By the close of 1942 a new textile mill capitalized at one million taels was in operation in Tihwa, the province had a sizable iron and steel plant, and new sugar-refining and canning factories were in process of [377] construction. With the aid of a large hydraulic plant the electric power of the province had been increased by this date to 28,000 kilowatts. [214] [204] Public printing offices have been opened at such widely separated points as Tihwa, T'a Ch'eng, Kashgar, Sui-ting, Aqsu, and A Shan, and the *Sinkiang Daily News* is being published in Tihwa.

Communications

●206 Modern communications have made the province aware of the stirring events in the outside world. Telegraph services were opened between 1893 and 1896 when Emperor Kuang Hsü appropriated 240,000 Chinese taels to construct the initial lines and offices. In the period 1903 to 1913 lines were completed which brought the service to Tihwa, Ch'i-t'ai (Ku Ch'eng-tzu), and the Altai region. Successful experiments were made with a radio station at Kashgar and Tihwa in 1921, and a 250-watt station was installed at the capital in 1930. By 1939 radio stations were located at such important towns as Tihwa, Kashgar, Ch'i-t'ai, Ha-mi, T'a Ch'eng, Barkol, Karashahr, Sui-ting, Kucha, and Aqsu. Under the Sheng Shih-ts'ai regime fourteen new wireless and eight new radio stations are said to have been set up. Under his first three-year plan Sheng put through the rigging up of 672 miles of telegraph wire, the repair of 1,379 miles of old lines, and the construction of 1,350 miles of telephone lines. Through these facilities the Chinese and Russian official news services, Central News and Tass, bring up-to-date information to the provincial capital.

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494 Repairs and reconstruction were in addition undertaken over more than 1,875 miles of what is called "dry line" between Tihwa and Khotan (running via Karashahr, Kucha, Aqsu, and Kashgar). A transport control office of the provincial government, which had over 400 trucks of its own in 1938, has maintained control and repair stations on every line and by that date well over the equivalent of $500,000 U.S. currency had been expended on such work. By 1941 it was reported that there were altogether 3,000 trucks engaged in Sinkiang transport work.

Truck transport that has connected Tihwa with Soviet Russia and with other parts of China ran principally from T'a Ch'eng (on the Russian border) through Tihwa to Hsing-hsing Hsia (on the border of Chinese Kansu Province). There has also been important South Sinkiang contact with Soviet Russia from Kashgar to Andizhan via the Terek Pass. On the Chinese side the Sinkiang road system mainly links up with routes that have been under the direction of the Chinese Northwest Highway Administration via the 800-mile Kansu-Sinkiang motor road, which runs from Hsing-hsing Hsia (Baboon Pass) to Lan-chou. The Northwest Highway Administration has had a force—of 1,500 trucks as well as 5,000 drivers and supplementary workers—which maintains lines ultimately connecting up with Chungking. The main Kansu line, a modernization of the old Imperial Caravan Road which used to bear traffic in camels and carts from Sinkiang to Pei-p'ing, represents plans and work extending over the years from 1935 to the present.

Traditionally less well developed and less practicable for truck transport are the caravan trails which lead from Sinkiang (in the south) to Ch'inghai and (in the north) to Mongolia. These have been regularly used for limited local commerce—particularly the stretch from Keriya via Cherchen to Wu-erh-t'eng in Western Ch'inghai—and have great truckage and rail possibilities for the future.

Some Recent Developments

206 A milestone in Sinkiang modernization was the opening of through telephone connections between Tihwa and Chungking. *Ta Kung Pao* correspondent Ch'en Chi-jung used the line when he was in Tihwa on

October 23, 1942. He has reported that even though reception was weak on the other side, he could hear Chungking clearly. Another sign of the times was the announcement by Chungking postal circles on May 28, 1943, that direct mail service between Sinkiang Province and India had been inaugurated. According to the published report, "After the loss of Burma, all the mail destined for countries by the overland route was sent to Russia where it was re-directed to its various destinations. The opening of the new service has speeded up mail delivery to foreign lands. Arrangements are being made for the opening of parcel service on this overland route."

The wartime fight against inflation and against serious jarring of living conditions has met with considerable success. It is claimed that Price Control Commissions set up "everywhere" have made the Sinkiang price level the lowest in China. Yet wages, correspondent Ch'en Chi-jung has found, are high. Ch'en, walking by a 1942 Sinkiang road construction project about six miles outside of Tihwa, came across laborers who were receiving $12 Chinese a day. He indicates that skilled workers of the province were currently receiving even more.

Serious wage lags in the case of subordinate government salaried employees have been one of China's serious problems in the inflationary years of her Resistance and Reconstruction. This may have been proving difficult for Sinkiang also since many of her government workers, for instance, still receive little more than $200 Chinese a month. But Sinkiang authorities have been meeting the situation for such workers with reductions of social and public expenses, with compensation in the way of reduced prices on commodities, and with small monthly subsidies in such staples as rice, flour, salt, sugar, matches, and oil.

Reports in October, 1943, of Russian "withdrawal" from Sinkiang, have been coupled with increasingly illuminating accounts of new Chinese migration to the province. This can promise a whole new vista of reconstruction developments in the province, and such developments deserve to be watched with keen interest. One of the most immediately noticeable effects has been the announcement on November 10, 1943, of an "ambitious plan" for the modernization of the Sinkiang capital. "During the past three months," the report states, "thousands

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927 AF13 Northwest China
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491 of which was full of tamarisk mounds. Many of these stood twenty feet high, and here, as everywhere in the
137 desert, each plant was raised on a mound accumulated round its roots, this being the soil blown by the wind from some more fertile region. Among the tamarisks were plants of Saksaul (*Anabasis Ammodendron*), whose contorted stems, grey cracked bark, green plumes of small greyish leaves, and pink fruit differentiated them from the more feathery species. It has been computed that these tamarisk hills may be from 500 to 1000 years old. The trunks of a forest of dead poplars stood beyond, and added a final touch to the desolation of the scene.

361 Tsikioking—'The Seven Cornered Well'—stands in the sandy basin, and is now a place of some importance,
[205] boasting a small Government Official who also controls
[487] the post-office. It is here that the roads divide which
• [206] lead from Hami to Turfan, and Hami to Kucheng. We were following the latter, but the telegraph wire went via Turfan to Urumchi. Great as was our desire to see Turfan—a most interesting locality—we realised that it was scarcely safe to enter such a hot area at midsummer.
[132] We were warned that at this season people were dying
[342] from heat, and that the inhabitants protected themselves by spending the hours from sunrise to sunset in underground cave dwellings. The Turfan depression descends to two hundred feet below sea-level, and presents conditions most favourable to agriculture but almost insupportable to man. Tsikioking is better
3'12 supplied with fuel than any of the surrounding oases, and in winter its population is increased by families who move here for those months. The best fuel known in the desert is the root of the tamarisk. It is of dark hard wood which, chopped into small pieces and sun-dried looks like coal, and has a great deal of its burning

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927 AF13 Northwest China
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fatigue, and were wont to vent their irritation on the mules. We had an interesting lesson in animal psychology when one of the drivers went a little too far in beating a mule, whose feelings he injured more than its body. It quietly went on strike, and though it walked with the team, yet kept the traces so slack as to bring no ' pull ' upon the cart. The Chinese understood the situation at once. ' It's temper is up ! ' they said, ' and we must take it out of the traces and walk it for a bit.' This they did, but the animal did not recover itself until it had been ridden for a few hours, received an extra feed, and been petted. After this acknowledgment of unjust treatment, it recovered its ' face,' and went to work again ! Little Molly always held herself aloof from the common herd, only associating with her own shaft-mule. Her spirit was splendid, and she pulled with an energy that was foreign to the baser sort. Both men and beasts were needing the long rest which lay before them at Urumchi.

We had been without the guiding telegraph wire ever since we parted from it at Tsikioking, but at Kucheng we met with it once more, and we were glad of its indication over the rolling steppes which we now so frequently crossed. A new feature of the road was the little Ili Valley cart, of a build unfamiliar to us. The fact that it had four wheels gave it a Western look, for all Chinese carts, large or small, are built on two wheels, and this new structure was unknown to most of our party, who were as delighted as children to see this departure from the agelong, traditional vehicle.

Leaving Santai, an hour's drive brought us to the site of the original town of that name, now a mass of crumbling ruins, one more reminder of the havoc and desolation wrought by the Moslem rebellion in 1862–1877. Ruined villages, hamlets and farmsteads, mark

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927 AF13 Northwest China
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Russia which provides it with manufactured goods, and its own most noted product is sulphur.

The streets of Urumchi present a mass of low, formless, utilitarian buildings, covering a large area. The Governor's Yamen, which occupies a large enclosure, contains spacious courtyards dominated by a high tower, from which the surrounding country can be surveyed. Second in importance to the Government buildings is the new Post Office, constructed with a view to dealing with large quantities of mail material. The postal system is excellently controlled, and for many years the position of Postal Commissioner has been held by a Westerner, who, at the time of our visit, was an Italian. Thanks to energetic organisation, the enforcement of a time limit on the couriers, and the careful division of the road into well-regulated stages, Urumchi is brought within forty-five days of Peking—a truly marvellous accomplishment. The direct postal communication with Europe via Chuguchak, Semipalatinsk, and Omsk was suspended during the war, but is now once more available, by which means letters can reach London in twenty-eight days. There is a wireless installation in daily communication with Kashgar, but this is under the strict supervision of the Governor. The Russo-Asiatic Bank formerly had a branch office here, and a few Western firms have opened agencies through which they now carry on business.

The stream of *emigrés* who left Russia at the time of the Revolution, have had an important bearing on the development of Urumchi, which has resulted in the formation of a Russian quarter. Here the impoverished refugee, the Nogai, and the Sart live side by side, and of recent years the Soviet Government has appointed a Consul General to guard their interests. Permission to erect a statue of Lenin in the Consular grounds has been

3: Cable & French M1-5 (1926) 1927 AF13 Northwest China
Sinkiang AI 1

This town is known to Russians as Chuguchak, to Chinese as Tacheng, but colloquially it is always called Behya—'The Town of Seagulls'—because these birds, following the course of the Irtish River all the way from Arctic regions, collect here at certain seasons of the year. We had in fact already seen them in the Gobi further south, but could scarcely credit them to be really seagulls until we learnt that it is their habit to follow the great rivers as far as their sources. Geographically and politically the position of Tacheng is an important one, forming as it does the one outlet towards Siberia for all Turkestan. It is a populous, busy city, with important Chinese and Russian quarters. There is a Russian Consul in residence, part of whose duties consists in the issuing of temporary passports to drivers and carters passing to and fro over the border. There are postal and telegraph offices and a military station. The postmaster, Mr. Chang, was very helpful and friendly. He knew something of foreigners' tastes, being a Hankow man, and suggested that 'the ladies might enjoy a drive round the city,' and he therefore sent his Russian carriage and driver to show us the sights. Having completed the *Grand Tour* this man then asked us if we would like to see some more. 'Certainly,' we said, 'show us all there is worth seeing,' whereupon, with a grin, he whipped up his horse, and starting off at a good pace took us exactly over the same ground as before! The smart carriage, with strangers seated in it, attracted some attention on its first round, but when we appeared the second time the shopkeepers themselves came to their doors, exclaiming, 'Here they come again!' while one, making a movement with his hand, indicated that we were on a perpetual circular tour. To 'save face' we therefore drew up before some of the shops, and enquired the price of many of the goods, though we had not the slightest intention